

February 2023 Mentor Connection

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Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists

February 2023 Mentor Connection

As we enter the shortest month of the year, there is still plenty of time to work towards our personal professional development goals and many engaging opportunities listed in this month's newsletter!

CSTE Announcements

- The next [CSTE Annual Conference](#) will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah on **June 25-29, 2023**. Registration is now open.
- *Save the Date*: Our February networking event will occur on Wednesday, **February 15** at 4:00 pm EST. This networking event will feature a team game of Jeopardy. [Registration is required.](#)
- *Save the Date*: The next webinar in the CSTE Data Analytics Showcase will feature presentations on Tableau software on Friday, **February 17** at 1:00 pm EST. [Registration is required.](#)
- *Save the Date*: Join us for midway check-in calls to hear your feedback on the program so far.
 - Wednesday, **February 22** at 12:00 pm EST - [MENTOR Halfway Check-in Meeting](#)
 - Friday, **February 24** at 12:00 pm EST - [MENTEE Halfway Check-in Meeting](#)

If you have not yet joined the Basecamp group, you can do so [here](#). If your agency has blocked access to Basecamp, please consider using the mobile app or using a personal email address. Please reach out to Sarah Auer (sauer@cste.org) if you are unable to join or have any questions.

Basecamp regularly sends email notifications for activity on the page. If you would like to adjust your notifications, go to your initials in the upper right-hand corner and select "Change your notification settings." From here, you can decide when you would like to receive notifications.

Join the conversations. Check out the below discussion thread and contribute on Basecamp:

- [What have you read in 2023?](#)

Upcoming Tasks

Please complete each task individually and set up a time to discuss together. The activities have been posted on Basecamp.

- [GPSR exercise](#) (Due at the end of February) *Located in "Docs & Files" on Basecamp.*
 - The GPSR exercise is intended to have the mentor and mentee consider future career goals, support systems, career development, and self-reflection.
- [Midway Evaluation](#) (Due at the end of February)
 - The evaluation only takes a few minutes and your feedback is integral in improving the program.

Optional Activities

[Using Plain Language to Improve Health Literacy](#), Mid-Atlantic Regional Public Health Training Center, **February 2** at 12:00 pm EST

This webinar will educate health professionals about public health literacy and improve their ability to communicate in writing with the public. During this session, you will learn the fundamentals of health literacy, develop an understanding of the challenges of writing health and medical content

this fundamental predictor of health status. [Register here.](#)

[Migration and Health](#), Boston University School of Public Health, **February 8** at 1:00 pm EST

Population migration has long shaped the history of the world and remains today one of the central demographic shifts sculpting the world around us. This conversation will feature several contributing authors from [Migration and Health](#), an edited anthology that aims to advance our understanding of the causes and consequences of human migration. [Register here.](#)

[NACCHO: “Joy in Work” Webinar #2 – Having Conversations that Matter in Local Public Health](#), **February 28** at 2:00 pm EST

NACCHO will help you to explore a conversation framework that identifies barriers and supports for joy in work. Conversations That Matter have the power to change the way that we work with each other and provide real strategies for increasing staff wellbeing. [Register here.](#)

[Best Practices in Public Health Communication to Promote Equity and Inclusion](#), Maine Public Health Association, webinar

This webinar will use didactic and workshop techniques to inform participants of best practices in public health communication to promote equity and inclusion. An overview of health literacy will be discussed, as well as how it connects to health equity. We will also speak about health literacy efforts in our community, and review how health literacy can be improved using digital literacy, cross-cultural communication, and non-biased language. [Register here.](#)

Suggested Discussion Topics

Mentors and mentees should be communicating at least once a month throughout the program. These meetings can happen via video or phone call, email, instant messaging, or whichever method works!

We will be providing some general discussion topics in each monthly Mentor Connection to help guide your conversations. Some ideas for this month include:

- What are my strengths and capabilities?
- How are my strengths and capabilities being used (or not being used) in my role?

Tips for Personal Growth

In this section, we will share tips and tricks for enhancing your professional growth and leadership skills.

- [4 Ideas to Beat the New Year Doldrums](#) by Rae Ringel

For many of us, January and February are often the least-productive and dreariest months of the year. How can you help your team beat the new year doldrums? First, embrace experimentation. Where can you introduce new routines, tools, and habits into your team's culture? Maybe you replace hour-long meetings with 15-minute, agile-inspired check-ins, or designate a "no-Slack" day of the week. Whatever your team's experiment is, be sure to commit to it for at least a few weeks.

Next, recognize your employees by expressing appreciation or gratitude. You might frame such gestures as a "thank you in advance" for work to come in the new year. Since the holiday season has just passed, your employees probably aren't expecting this kind of gesture—which is exactly why it could provide the jolt they need right now. Finally, reconnect your team with what matters most, whether that's your customers, clients, products, or users. Ask your employees to identify how their work will drive the team's overall mission in the coming year. Taking a moment to reflect as the calendar turns will help your team ground itself in its purpose and meaning.

Citation: Ringel, Rae. (2023, January 17). 4 Ideas to Beat the New Year Doldrums. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved January 24, 2023, from [https://hbr.org/2023/01/4-ideas-to-beat-the-new-year-doldrums?](https://hbr.org/2023/01/4-ideas-to-beat-the-new-year-doldrums?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter_daily&utm_campaign=mtod_actsubs&utm_content=signinnudge)
[utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter_daily&utm_campaign=mtod_actsubs&utm_content=signinnudge](https://hbr.org/2023/01/4-ideas-to-beat-the-new-year-doldrums?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter_daily&utm_campaign=mtod_actsubs&utm_content=signinnudge)

What Are You Reading?

What are you reading? We'd like to know, so tell us how you're expanding your mind these days, either personally or professionally (i.e., fiction or non-fiction, fantasy, graphic novels, etc.) and we'll share them in each Mentor Connection. Submit authors and titles with a brief summary and critique to WFResources@cste.org and we'll take it from there.

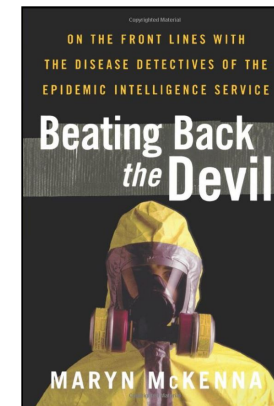
This month's recommendation is [Beating Back the Devil: On the front lines with the disease detectives of the epidemic intelligence service](#) by Marilyn McKenna

From Amazon:

The universal human instinct is to run from an outbreak of disease like Ebola. These doctors run toward it. Their job is to stop epidemics from happening.

They are the disease detective corps of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the federal agency that tracks and tries to prevent disease outbreaks and bioterrorist attacks around the world. They are formally called the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS)—a group founded more than fifty years ago out of fear that the Korean War might bring the use of biological weapons—and, like intelligence operatives in the traditional sense, they perform their work largely in anonymity. They are not household names, but over the years they were first to confront the outbreaks that became known as hantavirus, Ebola, and AIDS. Every day they work to protect us by hunting down the deadly threats that we forget until they dominate our headlines, West Nile virus, anthrax, and SARS among others.

In this riveting narrative, Maryn McKenna—the only journalist ever given full access to the EIS in its fifty-three-year history—follows the first class of disease detectives to come to the CDC after September 11, the first to confront not just naturally occurring outbreaks but the man-made threat of bioterrorism. They are talented researchers—



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		on the frontlines, in the yellow suits and masks, that has helped eradicate smallpox, push back polio, and solve the first major outbreaks of Legionnaires' disease, toxic shock syndrome, and <i>E. coli</i> O157 and works to battle every new disease before it becomes an epidemic. Urgent, exhilarating, and compelling, <i>Beating Back the Devil</i> takes you inside the world of these medical detectives who are trying to stop the next epidemic—before the epidemics stop us. <i>Note: While CSTE recommends these books for casual reading, the themes and ideas contained are those of the author, and CSTE does not necessarily endorse or promote them as part of the organizational mission/vision.</i> CSTE Subcommittee of the Month <i>Each month we will feature a different CSTE committee or workgroup, its purpose and ongoing work. Subcommittees and workgroups are a great opportunity to get involved, meet other members, and contribute to national public health work.</i> Name of Subcommittee/Workgroup: Advanced Molecular Detection Workgroup Co-chairs: Arianna Miles-Jay (MI); Meagan Burns (MA); Heather Blankenship (MI) Purpose: Collaborate with the CDC and state, tribal, local, or territorial (STLT) epidemiologists to		

3:00 pm EST.

Current Activities: AMD Workgroup Calls, AMD Webinar Series, AMD Academy, AMD Workshop, Sponsor 1 CSTE LEAD

Staff contact: Abby Hoffman, ahoffman@cste.org

Get Inspired!

What inspires you? We will use this section to share motivational and thought-provoking content relevant to public health, professional growth, or other topics that you find meaningful to your work. Submit your favorite online articles, videos, podcast episodes or series, etc. to WFResources@cste.org to be featured in the next Mentor Connection.

- [Climate + Health Equity](#), Public Health Review Morning Edition (podcast)
- [Demystifying the Hiring Process in Public Health](#), Public Health Insight (podcast)
- [Building a Culture of Care: Leadership in Public Health Agencies](#), ASTHO (blog)
- [Career Coaching: Overachieving, Workplace Boundaries, and Mindset Shifts with Shaperyla Smith](#), Your Next Move (podcast)



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